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SON OF HAMAS

A GRIPPING ACCOUNT OF TERROR,
BETRAYAL, POLITICAL INTRIGUE,
AND UNTHINKABLE CHOICES

MOSAB HASSAN YOUSEF
WITH RON BRACKIN

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Son of Hamas: A Gripping Account of Terror, Betrayal, Political Intrigue, and Unthinkable Choices

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Yousef, Mosab Hassan.

Son of Hamas: a gripping account of terror, betrayal, political intrigue, and unthinkable choices / Mosab Hassan Yousef, with Ron Brackin.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 978-1-4143-3307-6 (hbk)

1. Yousef, Mosab Hassan. 2. Christian converts from Islam—Israel—Biography. J. Brackin, Ron.

II. Title.

BV2626 .A Y68A3 2010

248.2'46092—dc22

[B]

2009046326

ISBN 978-1-4143-3668-8 (International Trade Paper Edition)

Printed in the United States of America

16 15 14 13 12 11 10

7 6 5 4 3 2 1

MOSSAD HASSAN YOUSEF

ing. He was a religious leader with no clue about the army or what I knew. He finally agreed not to be happy about it.

I came to the conclusion that it would logically be the next target. It seemed that everyone around me was glancing anxiously at me as quickly as possible. I was solely for the chug of incoming collateral damage.

He said and told him to stay there. I was going to change your room and don't bring anybody to your room. Don't leave this place. Here's a

where he was.
in trouble."

It was every moment. I had to tell all his bodyguards. I couldn't tell him totally. If he didn't, he thought that would cost him his life. I arranged for all of his bodyguards to happen anywhere near the world, and I was the outside. I carried the added benefit of being a spy.

As a leader, I carried an M16, weapons, connections, and authority (big demand and short supply of dollars). And I traded heavily with the Mossad.

Hamas military guys began to hang around me just to show off. And because they thought I knew all the secrets of the organization, they felt comfortable sharing their problems and frustrations with me, believing I could help them with their issues.

I listened carefully. They had no idea they were giving me little bits of information that I was piecing together to create much bigger pictures. These snapshots led to more Shin Bet operations than I could describe to you in a single book. What I will tell you is that many innocent lives were saved as a result of those conversations. There were many fewer grieving widows and shattered orphans at gravesides because of the suicide bombings we were able to prevent.

At the same time, I gained trust and respect within the military wing and became the go-to Hamas guy for other Palestinian factions as well. I was the person they expected to provide them with explosives and to coordinate operations with Hamas.

One day, Ahmad al-Faransi, an aide to Marwan Barghouti, asked me to get him some explosives for several suicide bombers from Jenin. I told him I would, and I began to play the game—stalling until I could uncover the bombers' cells in the West Bank. Games like that were very dangerous. But I knew I was covered from several directions. Just as being the eldest son of Sheikh Hassan Yousef kept me safe from Hamas-on-Hamas torture in prison, it also protected me when I worked among terrorists. My job with USAID gave me a certain amount of protection and freedom as well. And the Shin Bet always had my back.

Any mistake, however, could have cost me my life, and the Palestinian Authority was always a threat. The PA had some fairly sophisticated electronic eavesdropping gear that had been provided by the CIA. Sometimes they used it to ferret out terrorists. Other times it was deployed to root out collaborators. So I had to be very careful, especially of falling into the hands of the PA, since I knew more about how the Shin Bet operated than any other agent.